

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 10933 021328Z

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9814

INFO USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 10933

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR IR IZ MU

SUBJ: IRANIAN VIEWS ON IRAQ AND PROPOSED GULF FOREIGN MINISTERS
CONFERENCE

REF: TEHRAN 10758 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: MFA OFFICIAL HAS SOME DOUBTS ABOUT IRANIAN ATTENDANCE AT
NOVEMBER 25 MUSCAT CONFERENCE IN VIEW OF APPARENT IRAQI REFUSAL
TO ATTEND-- BUT NO FINAL DECISION YET MADE. HE REVIEWED RECENT HIS-
TORY OF GULF SECURITY ISSUE AND CONFIRMED SOME RECENT DEVELOPMENTS
IN IRAN-IRAQ RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. ON NOV 1 MFA DIR GEN (FOR ASIA, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA)
SADRIEH REVIEWED WITH POLCOUNS CONSIDERATIONS AFFECTING CON-
FERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS ON PERSIAN GULF SECUIRTY SCHEDULED
FOR MUSCAT NOV 25, AS WELL AS RECENT RELATIONS WITH IRAQ.

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PAGE 02 TEHRAN 10933 021328Z

2. ACCORDING TO SADRIEH, OMAN FONMIN VISITED BAGHDAD SOME TEN

TO 12 DAYS AGO PRESSING FOR IRAQI ACCEPTANCE OF OMAN'S INVITATION TO NOV 25 CONFERENCE. HE WAS NOT SUCCESSFUL. THIS RAISED QUESTION IN SADRIEH'S OWN MIND WHETHER IT WOULD BE WISE FOR IRAN TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONFERENCE. IF CONFERENCE ISSUED DECLARATION ON GULF SECURITY IN IRAQ'S ABSENCE, THAT MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY IRAQ AS UNFRIENDLY GESTURE. HE NOTED THAT IRAQ'S SADDAM HUSSEIN HAD FIRST SUGGESTED TO THE SHAH IRAQ-IRAN COOPERATION ON GULF SECURITY WHEN HE VISITED TEHRAN IN CONTEXT OF 1975 IRAN-IRAQ AGREEMENTS. ON THAT OCCASION, THERE HAD BEEN SECOND MEETING IN WHICH FONMINS AND THEIR STAFFS PARTICIPATED WHEN IRAQI SUGGESTION WAS REPEATED, SO THAT THERE COULD BE NO QUESTION ABOUT IT. HOWEVER, AT SUBSEQUENT FONMINS MEETING IN JIDDA, IRAQIS UNACCOUNTABLY REVERSED THEMSELVES AND CLAIMED THEY WERE ONLY TALKING ABOUT ANY AGREEMENT ON "FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION" IN THE GULF. THIS OF COURSE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH SECURITY OF THE GULF (IN SADRIEH'S OPINION) SINCE FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION IS IN FACT ALREADY SAFEGUARDED BY VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS. IRAQIS MAINTAINED SAME STANCE ON THE SUBJECT DURING 1975 UNGA SESSION.

3. HOWEVER, SADRIEH CAUTIONED, GOI HAS NOT YET MADE ANY FINAL DECISION ON WHETHER OR NOT TO ATTEND MUSCAT CONFERENCE. IN SPECULATING ON WHAT CAUSED REVERSAL OF IRAQ'S POSITION, SADRIEH REFERRED TO SCHISMS WITHIN REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND COUNCIL. SADDAM HUSSEIN IS "NOT MORE MODERATE, BUT AT LEAST MORE OBJECTIVE" THAN THE OTHERS-- ABOUT WHOM NOT MUCH IS KNOWN IN ANY CASE. SINCE 1975, SADRIEH CONTINUED, IRAQIS HAVE DRAWN CLOSER TO THE SOVIETS. (HOWEVER, SADRIEH DID NOT SUGGEST SOVIET PRESSURE AS A POSSIBLE EXPLANATION FOR IRAQI REVERSAL OF POSITION.)

4. 1975 IRAN-IRAQ AGREEMENTS PROVIDED FRAMEWORK, SADRIEH SAID, FOR SOLUTION OF IRAN'S BILATERAL PROBLEMS WITH IRAQ, THOUGH SOLUTION OF REGIONAL PROBLEMS STILL NOT PROVIDED FOR. HE DESCRIBED RECENT IRAQI DEL HERE (WHICH WAS HEADED BY MINISTER OF INTERNAL TRADE AND ALSO INCLUDED A MINISTER OF STATE WHO WAS A KURD) AS DEALING WITH NON-POLITICAL PROBLEMS. ONE WAS EXTENSION OF TIME LIMIT FOR REPATRIATION OF KURDISH REFUGEES FROM IRAQ WHO WISHED TO RETURN THERE. IRANISANS PRESSED FOR NO TIME LIMIT AT ALL AND FOR BETTER TREATMENT OF REFUGEES ONCE THEY RETURN TO IRAQ. IRAQI DEL GRANTED ONE MONTH EXTENSION (ALREADY REPORTED) AND GENERALLY AGREED IN PRINCIPLE WITH NEED FOR GOOD TREATMENT OF

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PAGE 03 TEHRAN 10933 021328Z

REPATRIATED REFUGEES. SADRIEH'S INFORMATION WAS THAT AS OF 3 OR 4 MONTHS AGO, IRAQIS HAVE STOPPED TRANSFERS OF KURDISH POPULATION FROM THEIR NATIVE AREAS TO OTHER PARTS OF IRAQ AND MAY IN SOME INSTANCES EVEN BE SENDING SOME OF THOSE ALREADY TRANSFERRED BACK TO THEIR HOMES. WHILE HE WAS NOT SURE ON THIS LAST POINT, SADRIEH SAID HE WAS SURE THOSE BEING REPATRIATED AT PRESENT ARE NOT GOING BACK TO THEIR PREVIOUS HOMES IN IRAQ.

5. ANOTHER RESULT OF VISIT WAS DECISION TO ESTABLISH IRAQI CONSULATES IN KHORRAMSHAHR AND KERMANSHAH. (IRANIANS HAVE ALREADY ESTABLISHED THEIR TWO CONSULATES GENERAL IN IRAQ.)

6. ALSO DISCUSSED BY IRAQI DEL WERE ARRANGEMENTS FOR IRANIAN PILGRIMS TO VISIT SHIITE SHRINES IN IRAQ. THIS WAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH AGREEMENTS AND WAS AN IMPORTANT MEASURE FOR IRANIANS, SINCE IRAQI LAW PROVIDED THREE YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR ANYBODY ENTERING IRAQ IL-LEGALLY. THAT WAS VERY HARD ON SIMPLE SOULS DESIRING TO VISIT HOLY SHIRINES. RELEASE OF 80 IRANIAN CITIZENS FROM BASRA JAIL ON OCCASION OF SHAH'S BIRTHDAY RECENTLY SHOULD BE VIEWED IN THIS CONTEXT, SINCE IT WAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH IRAN-IRAQ AGREEMENT (REFTEL).

7. FINALLY, SADRIEH CONFIRMED THAT SMALL ADJUSTMENTS OF TERRITORY ON IRAN-IRAQ BORDER (IN CONNECTION WITH 1975 AGREEMENT) SHOULD BE TAKING PLACE IN NOT-TOO-DISTANT FUTURE.

8. COMMENT: SADRIEH'S COMMENTS FLESHED OUT, BUT WERE GENERALLY CONSISTENT WITH, SHAH'S RECENT REMARKS TO AMBASSADOR ON THESE SUBJECTS. (CF. TEHRAN 10827). GIVEN IRAN'S PRESENT INTEREST IN BETTER RELATIONS WITH IRAQ, AND THE CONSIDERABLE DIVERGENCE OF VIEWS AMONG GULF GOVERNMENTS ON THE EXACT MEANS BY WHICH TO ASSURE GULF SECURITY, IT SEEMS A GOOD BET THAT--IF MUSCAT CONFERENCE IS INDEED HELD AS SCHEDULED--ANY DECLARATION ON GULF SECURITY THAT MIGHT COME OUT OF IT WOULD BE STRICTLY ANODYNE.
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